



*Alexandria Police Department*  
**Directive 13.3**



# INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

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**Cancels:** 10-04-2006 and  
11.11 – Hostage or Barricade Situations

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**13.3.01 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Police Department to plan and prepare for the coordinated handling of significant incidents or emergencies.

The Incident Command System (ICS) is designed to provide a structure to assist in dealing with significant natural and man-made events. This system can stand alone to handle matters within the City, or expand and integrate with the Northern Virginia Chief of Police Mutual Aid Agreement (area), the Council of Governments Mutual Aid Agreement (region), and with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) (national).

Any system designed for handling emergencies cannot provide specific guidelines for every situation. In some instances specific responsibilities are defined; in others only a general outline is provided. This directive and its annexes are not intended to limit or restrict initiative, judgment, or independent action that may be required to provide for the appropriate and effective control of a situation. Used as a structure and a guide, it will provide the basis for effective operational command and control.

This directive and its annexes are intended to be a useful tool and guide for the policies and procedures to be used in an emergency situation. *Specific training on ICS/All Hazard incidents will be coordinated, conducted, and documented annually for affected agency personnel using tabletop scenarios, actual exercises, or multiple agency involvement.*

[46.1.9]

04-12-2013

**13.3.02 AUTHORITY**

The authority to act under this directive is derived from the various provisions of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Mutual Aid Agreement, the Northern Virginia Mutual Aid Agreement, Virginia State Code, Alexandria City Code and the Directives of this agency. Where a specific level of authority is required to invoke a provision of the ICS, that requirement is specified.

**13.3.03 INTRODUCTION**

This Incident Command System (ICS) is designed to provide commanders and supervisors with the guidance to assist them in the control of a significant incident. The system permits an Incident Commander to use as much, or as little, of the system as necessary to manage a particular event. The presumption is made that at the scene of a joint police/fire incident, the Police Department will command a police type incident and the Fire Department will command a fire type incident. It is quite possible that as the dynamics of a single incident change, the command of that incident will shift. On some major incidents, both police and fire operations may be commanded by another City official acting as Incident Commander, depending on the nature of the incident.

The ICS can readily adapt to changing situations and expand logically from the initial response to the handling of a major incident. The ICS allows various personnel to perform in their normal roles as closely as possible. A commander still commands and a supervisor still supervises. Police personnel continue to protect and maintain order, and fire personnel continue to conduct fire and rescue operations.

For the Police Department, the ICS System and all its elements fall under the oversight and authority of the Special Operations Division commander. This includes, but is not limited to, all issues related to the Special Operations Team (SOT), the Hostage Negotiations Team (HNT), the Logistics Support Team (LST), the Incident Commanders (IC), and the Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU). For their specialized ancillary duty responsibilities, these units and their commanders report to the Special Operations Division commander within the Operations Support Bureau chain of command.

The ICS works through the following mechanisms:

- A standard organizational structure is developed and adapted to fit the emergency.
- Positions in the structure are filled on an as-needed basis.
- The Incident Commander retains all responsibilities until they are delegated to others.
- ICS provides a logical method for upgrading to meet the events and provides transitions of command levels as an incident grows.

#### 13.3.04 DEFINITIONS

**Agency Representative** - person assigned to support the Incident Commander from an assisting or cooperating agency with full authority to make decisions on all matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident.

**Command Post** – a temporary location from which the incident will be operationally controlled. The circumstances of each incident will dictate the command post type and location. [46.1.3b]

**CP1** – the radio identifier for the Incident Commander.

**Emergency Management Liaison** – City's Emergency Manager or designee assigned to the incident.

**Evacuation Supervisor** – a supervisor who is appointed as needed to manage any evacuation effort and reports to the Operations Officer.

**Hostage Negotiations Team (HNT)** – a team of officers specially trained to communicate with hostage takers and individuals who are barricaded.

**Hostage Situation** – In order for a watch commander to declare a hostage or barricade incident, the following three conditions must be present:

1. Legal justification for police action, including sufficient probable cause for an arrest or emergency mental detention order for the subject, or sufficient information to justify the belief that the subject poses a substantial and immediate threat to the lives and safety of him/herself or others;
2. A credible belief that the subject is holding others against their will, or has placed him or herself in a position by action, cover, or concealment so as to prevent detection or apprehension by police; and
3. The subject has not responded or has refused to respond to police attempts to communicate with him/her or expressed refusal to peacefully surrender.

**HNT Commander** – a specially trained commander who reports to the Incident Commander and manages the negotiation aspects of hostage/barricade situations. The HNT assistant commander will assume the HNT commander's duties in the commander's absence.

**HNT Supervisor** – a trained negotiator designated by the HNT commander to coordinate the activities of the HNT.

**Incident Commander** – a commander who assumes overall responsibility in designated major incidents. He or she may later be relieved by one of a specially designated group of Incident Commanders.

**Incident Command Vehicle** – a specially equipped vehicle designed for command and control purposes. When an incident occurs, this vehicle is brought to the scene on the direction of the Incident Commander. This vehicle provides the Incident Commander and other staff a workspace to manage the incident.

**Investigations/intelligence Officer** – reports to the Operations Officer, and is responsible for investigation and intelligence functions at the incident scene.

**Logistics Support Team (LST)** – specially trained Resource Sergeants used to provide support at the command post area and report to the LST commander.

**LST Commander** - a specially trained commander who reports to the Incident Commander and manages the logistical support aspects of the incident.

**Negotiations Operations Center (NOC)** - the space located near or adjacent to the command post from which negotiations are conducted.

**Operations Officer** – a commander who reports to the Incident Commander and is responsible to assist the Incident Commander in general command strategy development and to ensure the execution of the Incident Commander's directions.

**Perimeter Control Supervisor** – a supervisor who manages the outer perimeter and reports to the Operations Officer.

**Planning Officer** – if assigned, reports to the Incident Commander, and is responsible for planning and forward thinking functions as directed by the Incident Commander.

**Public Information Officer (PIO)** – reports to the Incident Commander, and is responsible to disseminate factual and timely reports to the news media. All media requests will be referred to the PIO during the period the incident is in progress. All media releases will be approved by the Incident Commander. [46.1.3f]

**Recorder** – a lieutenant or higher rank, appointed by the Incident Commander to record the actions, orders, and general timeline of the incident.

**Safety Officer** – if assigned, reports to the Incident Commander, and is responsible for monitoring and assessing hazardous and unsafe situations and developing measures for assuring personnel safety.

**Special Operations Team (SOT)** – officers and medics trained in the use of special weapons and tactics, and responsible for the containment and apprehension of subjects in the inner perimeter.

**SOT Commander** – a specially trained commander who reports to the Incident Commander and manages the use of special weapons and tactics that relate to the containment and apprehension of subject(s) in the inner perimeter. The SOT assistant commander will assume the SOT commander's duties in the commander's absence.

**SOT Team Leader** – a sergeant or other member of the SOT team authorized by the SOT commander to serve as a leader.

**Staging Area Supervisor** – supervisor(s) who, if assigned, report to the Operations Officer and manage the orderly collection and dispatching of equipment and personnel.

**Tactical Operations Center (TOC)** – if created, it is staffed by personnel who gather intelligence and tactical information. This information is then passed onto the SOT and HNT commanders.

**Watch Commander** – the Patrol commander on-duty.

#### **13.3.05      COMMAND AND CONTROL**

- A. Whenever it becomes clear that an incident is, or may become, one that is more complex or may require more resources than normal, the Watch Commander will promptly respond to the scene. The Watch Commander will assess the situation and determine whether activation of the ICS is, or will become, necessary. It is the responsibility of the Watch Commander to activate an ICS response. He or she may consult other commanders or subject matter experts as thought useful, but it is ultimately the on-duty Watch Commander's decision. Activating the ICS response will bring significantly more resources and command and control to the situation. Once ICS is activated, the Watch Commander becomes the Incident Commander. He or she

will remain in that capacity until relieved by the next oncoming Watch Commander, or by one of the specially designated Incident Commanders. **[46.1.2; 46.1.3a]**

- B.** The Incident Commander will make the determination as to what level the resources of the Police Department are mobilized. If he or she mobilizes a significant part of the Department, the protocols outlined in the Mobilization annex to this directive are to be followed. **[46.1.3c]**
- C.** The exact size and form of the ICS response in any particular situation is determined by the Incident Commander based on the situation being faced. Not all positions articulated in the Definitions section of this directive will be needed or used for any given event. The system and the components to be activated are designed to be scaled up or down to meet the incident.
- D.** By default in every ICS event, there will be an Incident Commander.
- E.** In almost every ICS event there will be an Operations Officer, LST personnel, and a Recorder.
- F.** In Hostage or Barricade incidents, complete complements of both SOT and HNT and a Perimeter Control Supervisor are required to be added.
- G.** The use of the PIO, Safety Officer, Planning Officer, Staging Area Supervisor, Evacuation Supervisor, and Investigation/Intelligence Officer positions or functions are at the discretion of the Incident Commander based on the nature of the event.
- H.** Whenever a primary ICS position is filled, the person in that position will be given a specific vest to wear that identifies their designated function.
- I.** The actions of the Incident Commander will always be directed toward reducing the risk to human life as is practically possible. After that, other considerations such as the temporary or permanent damage to or loss of property, and/or simple life impacts can and should be considered.
- J.** The usual order of the steps in ICS events are:

  - 1. Identify the nature and scope of the problem
  - 2. Isolate and contain the problem
  - 3. Plan for the mitigation of the problem
  - 4. Mitigation of the problem
  - 5. Dealing with the immediate after-effects of the problem
  - 6. Demobilization to return to a normal status
- K.** In the event of a large-scale City-wide emergency or disaster, the City's Emergency Operations Plan may be invoked. Our ICS is designed to work in a cooperative manner with the rest of the City agencies. Which agency is, or becomes, the overall Incident Commander in a major City-wide event will be determined by the nature, scope, and duration of the incident. If it is not the Police Department, a police

commander will be chosen to work with the designated City Incident Commander. The City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) may be activated.

L. Regardless of who is in control of the incident, or what part the Police Department plays, there are some basic protocols during ICS incident operations. The following principles must be adhered to:

1. All responders, regardless of agency affiliation, must officially report in, as designated by the Incident Commander, to be accounted for and receive an assignment.
2. Each individual involved in incident operations will be assigned to only one supervisor at a time.
3. Commanders and supervisors must be able to adequately communicate with, supervise and control their subordinates and manage all resources under their supervision.
4. Commanders and supervisors must document all personnel and resources status changes as they occur.
5. All responders must provide status updates to their commanders and/or supervisors at regular designated intervals.
6. Personnel and equipment should respond only when requested or when specifically dispatched by an appropriate authority.

The Incident Commander, when he or she deems it necessary, will ensure Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) members are requested and respond to ongoing major incidents to liaison with family members of victims/suspects that are present. The CISM supervisor will report to and operate through the Operations Officer.

At the conclusion of an ICS incident, the commander/supervisor of each major component will retain any information that documents their function's activities. This information may be needed if any ICS actions are challenged and will prove useful for preparing the after-action reports. If large charts are created, they may be photographed for a permanent record.

#### **13.3.06 MUTUAL AID**

Mutual aid is available from any of the surrounding jurisdictions in the Greater Metropolitan Washington Area through either the Council of Governments (COG) or the Northern Virginia Mutual Aid Agreement. The mutual aid request should proceed first through the Northern Virginia Agreement, and if necessary, then proceed through the COG Agreement. In the event mutual aid is needed, refer to the Mutual Aid annex to this Directive for the criteria and procedure for requesting assistance. **[46.1.3d]**

It cannot be overemphasized that the Incident Commander must assess staffing needs early and begin the process of requesting mutual aid as soon as it is recognized that the incident will overtax local services. For example, implementation of a large scale

evacuation order will rapidly commit a large number of officers. There is the additional requirement that regular police services be maintained throughout the City during a disaster or major incident. Also, consideration must be given to structuring a shift system to allow for extended duration events and allow rest periods for working officers.

#### **13.3.07 AFTER-ACTION REPORTS**

Individual after-action reports need to be prepared by each of the major participants in the ICS event. These include, if they are employed, the SOT commander, the HNT commander, the LST commander, the Operations Officer, the PIO, the Recorder, and the on-duty Watch Commander(s). The Police Incident Commander may designate additional after-action reports at his or her discretion. All the individual after-action reports are to be submitted, within 30 calendar days, directly to the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander will then submit an overall report, with the subordinate reports attached, through the Operations Support Bureau chain of command to the Chief of Police within 45 calendar days of the incident, unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police.

These after-action reports will provide at a minimum: a description of the nature of the event; the names of the persons who held major positions in the event; a timeline; an overview of the event activities; accreditation compliance items; areas that worked well; identification of areas that did not work well and what was done about them on-scene; and any recommendations for long-term solutions/changes. **[46.1.3h]**

The Chief of Police will, based on review of the after-action report, initiate actions as appropriate to make the system work better. A copy of the completed after-action will then be forwarded to Planning and Accreditation.

**BY AUTHORITY OF:**

**Earl L. Cook**  
**Chief of Police**





# Directive 13.3

## APPENDICES

Effective Date 10-22-2012



- A. INCIDENT COMMANDER
- B. OPERATIONS COMMANDER
- C. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT  
COMMANDER/SUPERVISOR
- D. STAGING SUPERVISOR
- E. PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
- F. PLANNING  
COMMANDER/SUPERVISOR
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### APPENDIX A

#### Incident Commander

Responsible for the command and control of resources and staffing to achieve the maximum benefit toward resolution of the situation.

#### Duty checklist:

- ☐ Assess the situation by obtaining a briefing from the on scene supervisor or commander.
- ☐ Gather all possible intelligence for decision making.
- ☐ Establish a command post.
- ☐ Establish a staging area, if necessary.
- ☐ Ensure appropriate chain of command notifications are made and maintained.
- ☐ Appoint staff positions as needed.
- ☐ Estimate the number of personnel needed and activate emergency recall and mutual aid, as needed.
- ☐ Consult with other commanders and determine the most effective course of action.
- ☐ Make decisions and issue orders pertaining to the incident.
- ☐ Ensure the PIO is kept apprised of the situation.
- ☐ Ensure frequent status reports from staff.
- ☐ Ensure the safety of all affected personnel is maintained.
- ☐ Resolve the situation.
- ☐ Ensure records of activities are maintained.
- ☐ Demobilize, when appropriate.
- ☐ Conduct an after action debriefing.
- ☐ Complete and submit an after action report for the Chief of Police.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Operations Commander**

Responsible for the implementation of the strategic decisions made by the Incident Commander and the general management of the scene.

#### Duty Checklist:

- ☐ Ensure the command post is fully operational.
- ☐ Maintain command post and scene security.
- ☐ Obtain situation briefing from the Incident Commander.
- ☐ Establish perimeters.
- ☐ Direct and control traffic.
- ☐ Assess situational needs.
- ☐ Coordinate and conduct evacuations, if necessary.
- ☐ Brief staff as needed.
- ☐ Supervise emergency operations
- ☐ Establish communications with Watch Commander.
- ☐ Maintain communications with Incident Commander.
- ☐ If requested, establish a shift relief system if incident is of lengthy duration.
- ☐ Assign personnel in consideration of areas of expertise and regular duties.
- ☐ Determine the need for immediate and anticipated resources.
- ☐ Request frequent progress reports from staff.
- ☐ Arrange for detainee transportation, processing, and confinement, if applicable.
- ☐ Develop a demobilization plan, when appropriate.
- ☐ Maintain a record of activities.
- ☐ Conduct post-incident investigation.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Logistical Support Commander/Supervisor**

**[46.1.6]**

Responsible for acquiring personnel, supplies, and equipment as requested by the Operations Commander.

#### **Duty Checklist:**

- ☐ Obtain situation briefing from Operations Commander.
- ☐ Assess situational needs.
- ☐ Ensure medical support is available.
- ☐ Arrange for transportation, if necessary.
- ☐ Establish communications with the Operations Officer, and others as needed.
- ☐ Locate and arrange for necessary personnel, supplies and equipment.
- ☐ Direct the resources to the appropriate location as directed by the Operations Commander.
- ☐ Determine the need for immediate and anticipated resources.
  - ☐ Food
  - ☐ Lodging
  - ☐ Any special equipment needed

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Staging Supervisor**

Responsible for managing the assembly/dispersement of personnel and equipment to and from the staging area.

#### **Duty Checklist:**

- ❑ Obtain situation briefing from the Operations Commander.
- ❑ Assess situational needs.
- ❑ Suggest a location for Staging Area:
  - ❑ Accessible, but removed from the area
  - ❑ Out of the danger radius
  - ❑ Not in sight of the incident
  - ❑ Large enough to park vehicles, equipment and temporary shelters
  - ❑ Provide for water and rest area for personnel
- ❑ Supervise the activities at the staging area.
- ❑ Establish and maintain communications with the Operations Officer and the Logistical Support Commander/Supervisor.
- ❑ Control and log all personnel/resources coming to or leaving staging area.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Public Information Officer**

Responsible for the dissemination of factual and timely reports to the news media.

#### Duty checklist:

- ☐ Obtain briefing from the Incident Commander.
- ☐ Locate and establish a public information area.
  - ☐ Should be easily accessible to for the press
  - ☐ In proximity to the incident scene, but not in the area of danger or where it will hamper operations.
  - ☐ Should be able to handle the expected number of media.
- ☐ Establish and maintain media relations
- ☐ Provide public information
- ☐ Regulate media movement and access.
- ☐ Establish and maintain communications with the Incident Commander.
- ☐ Establish schedule for news briefings.
- ☐ Maintain a record of activities.

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Planning Commander/Supervisor**

**[46.1.5]**

If utilized as a separate staff position, is responsible for operational and strategic planning to provide options to the Incident Commander. Consideration of the 24 hour, 72 hour, 7 day, forward thinking considerations in a long term operation.

Duty checklist:

- ☐ Prepare a documented incident action plan.
- ☐ Collect, evaluate, and disseminate information and intelligence about the incident.
- ☐ Maintain information regarding the status of resources and anticipated equipment and staffing needs.
- ☐ Assemble information on current and alternative strategies.
- ☐ Identify needs for special resources.
- ☐ Provide periodic predictions on incident potential to the Incident Commander.
- ☐ Plan for post-incident demobilization.
- ☐ Prepare recommendations for release of resources.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Finance Officer**

**[46.1.7]**

If utilized as a separate staff position, is responsible for managing all financial and cost analysis aspects of the incident.

Duty checklist:

- ☐ Provide financial and cost analysis information for the service and support requirements as requested.
- ☐ Ensure that all personnel time records are properly documented.
- ☐ Keep Incident Commander informed of current service and support capabilities.
- ☐ Procure additional resources if requested.
- ☐ Obtain list of assisting and cooperating agencies supporting the incident.
- ☐ Document injuries and liability issues.